

February 2012

HIGH SCHOOL COUNSELORS' INFORMATION

High School Counselor Janet Hennenfent

Important Dates To Remember

February	3	1:00 Dismissal (Jr. & Sr. make college visits/work on scholarships)
February	11	ACT Test Date (Take admissions ticket, drivers license, calculator & 2 pencils)
February	26	FAFSA completion workshop for seniors & parents at Black Hawk College Moline
February	17	1:00 Dismissal (Jr. & Sr. make college visits/work on scholarships)
February	20	No School President's Day (Jr. & Sr. make college visits/work on scholarships)
February	27	Frank E. Smith Family Scholarship due
March	2	1:00 Dismissal (Jr. & Sr. make college visits/work on scholarships)
March	16	1:00 Dismissal (Jr. & Sr. make college visits/work on scholarships)
March	30	Teacher Institute - No School (Jr. & Sr. make college visits/work on scholarships)
April	4	2:00 Dismissal Spring Break Starts (No school April 4th-9 th)
April	20	1:00 Dismissal (Jr. & Sr. make college visits/work on scholarships)
April	24 & 25	All juniors take the Prairie State Achievement Exam (starting at 8:00 a.m.) Freshmen take the Explore Exam (starting at 8:00 a.m.) Sophomores take the PLAN Exam (starting at 8:00 a.m.)

Seniors complete FAFSA Form on-line before March 1, 2012 www.fafsa.ed.gov

GOOD DAYS FOR STUDENTS AND PARENTS TO SCHEDULE COLLEGE VISITS

February	3	Early Dismissal (1:00 p.m.)	March	30	Teacher Institute - No School
February	17	Early Dismissal (1:00 p.m.)	April	4	2:00 Dismissal (Spring Break)
February	20	No School President's Day			
March	5	No School – Casimir Pulaski Day			
March	16	Early Dismissal (1:00 p.m.)			
March	18	Early Dismissal (1:00 p.m.)			
April	20	Early Dismissal (1:00 p.m.)			

Most post-secondary schools welcome and encourage students and parents to visit on Saturday, so everyone can have an opportunity to visit schools of their choice.

JUNIORS TAKE PRAIRIE STATE ACHIEVEMENT EXAM (PSAE)

All juniors will take the Prairie State Achievement Exam (PSAE) at Mercer County High School 8:00 a.m. through 12:30 p.m., on April 24 & 25, 2012. The Prairie State Achievement Exam measures the achievement of grade 11 students in English, Reading, Mathematics, and Science. The PSAE includes three components, divided between the two days of testing:

- Day 1 – Component one, is the ACT which includes the ACT battery of four multiple-choice tests English, Mathematics, Reading and Science)
- Day 2 – Component two, is ISBE (Illinois State Board of Education – developed science assessment)
Component three, is two WorkKeys assessments (Applied Mathematics & Reading for Information)

All juniors will register at Mercer County High School in late-March for the Prairie State Achievement Exam. Students will be asked to list up to four colleges where they want scores sent. The state of Illinois will pay to have each student's test scores sent to four schools. Colleges require ACT scores as part of the application process for admission. If students need additional colleges to receive their test scores the cost will range from \$10.00 (regular mail) up to \$30.00 (priority mail) for each school that needs a score report. Order score reports online at ACT.org.

JUNIORS - PREPARE FOR THE ACT

With all the competition in national testing, it is highly recommend that juniors study for the ACT. The following is a list of suggestions for juniors as they prepare to take the ACT:

1. Use free online ACT prep sites
2. Contact the local library for additional ACT study materials.
3. Buy an ACT Study Guide from a bookstore.
4. Contact the high school librarian for an ACT computerized program. (May be checked out or used at school.)
5. Ask the high school librarian to order ACT study materials through the inter loan library system.
6. Take an ACT prep class.

ACT/ETM PREP CLASSES

The Regional Office of Education, in cooperation with the school districts in ROE 27, is offering ACT Preparation classes over a nine-week period in three locations. The new ACT preparation course that the Regional Office will be offering is through Education Testing Methods, Inc. (ETM) and is divided into nine weekly sessions with each session lasting three hours. The registration and textbook fee for these classes is \$100. The Mercer County School District will pay \$50.00 for all students who attend Mercer County High School, making the student's cost \$50. There are still a few seats available on a first come basis. For more details contact the counselor's office at 582-2223 (ext. 3). Classes will meet on the following dates: Feb. 11, 18, 25, March 3, 10, 17, 24, 31, April 7.

Juniors Research Post-secondary Plans

During the month of February juniors are encouraged to discuss and research post-secondary options with their parents. Parents are asked to help students narrow the post-secondary selection to three schools by August of 2012. The graduating class of 2013 will be asked to submit post-secondary school/job applications starting September 2012. Please note the following suggestions to help with the post-secondary search:

1. Take a career interest inventory on-line.
2. Research post-secondary schools on-line for chosen career fields.
3. Arrange post-secondary visits with schools of interest.
4. Compile a list of local scholarships & collect applications to review scholarship criteria.
5. Prepare to take the ACT on April 27, 2011 at Mercer County High School.
6. Meet with college representatives in February, March & April as they visit Mercer High School.
7. The following are excellent websites to access as post-secondary plans are developed:
 - www.whatsnextillinois.org (Illinois Student Assistance Commission)
 - www.collegeboard.com (College Planning Resources)
 - www.irs.gov (Educational Tax Credit and Benefits)

CAREER INFORMATION FOR JUNIORS & SENIORS

Parents are encouraged to help students with their post-secondary plans by accessing the web sites listed below:

ASVAB – www.asvabprogram.com Military – www.todaysmilitary.com/ or www.armedforcescareers.com/
College Zone - www.collegezone.com Peace Corp – www.peacecorps.gov
Job Corp – www.jobcorps.dol.gov College View – www.collegeview.com
List of Colleges and universities – www.ute4xas/index.html Vocational Schools – www.vocationalschools.org
Illinois Student Assistance Commission - www.whatsnextillinois.org

What's Next Illinois www.whatsnextillinois.org

What's Next Illinois is a trusted source for college information set-up by the State of Illinois. Whether you're a student or parent you will find valuable information on grants, scholarships, loans, financial aid, prepaid tuition, **financial aid estimator**, **loan repayment calculator**, **SLOPE Calculator** and much more.

SENIORS (Post-secondary Up-date)

1. Complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid at www.fafsa.gov as soon as possible in February.
2. Seniors wanting help with grants and financial aid should make an appointment in the counselor's office with the Illinois Student Assistance Representative, Jake Watters. Jake will meet with seniors every other Tuesday, starting February 7.
3. Seniors should collect scholarship recommendations from teachers and community members by the second week in February.
4. Several colleges have stated that they will not accept applications after mid February 2012 since they currently have a limited number of openings for fall 2012. Seniors should have all college applications submitted no later than February 10, 2012.
5. Since housing will be limited at most colleges, seniors should notify colleges early in February and state their plans. Students should then make a housing deposit in about four to six weeks.
6. Seniors planning to enter the workforce immediately after high school should be completing job applications and setting up interviews by mid February.
7. Most colleges will allow seniors to take the ACT on campus, with the understanding that the ACT scores are only valid at that school. Seniors may take advantage of this opportunity to raise ACT scores so they are eligible for admission or scholarships at that college.

HIGH SCHOOL COUNSELOR'S INFORMATION (page 3)

8. Seniors please stop by the counselor's office by mid-February if you are interested in an apprenticeship program.
9. Seniors are encouraged to stop by the counselor's office for help in developing a post-secondary plan for next fall.
10. Parents are encouraged to call the counselor's office if they have any questions concerning their student's post-secondary plans. (Phone 582-2223 ext.3)
11. Parents/students are encouraged to visit the following web sites: www.collegezone.com & www.whatsnextillinois.org.

Illinois Student Assistance Rep Visits M.C.H.S. Bi-Weekly Starting Feb. 7

The Illinois Student Assistance Commission has hired and trained recent college graduates to help seniors complete all aspects of their post-secondary plans.. Jake Watters will serve as the Illinois Student Assistance Rep for Mercer County High School students. Mr. Waters will meet with seniors and interested parents from 8:00-3:30 every other Tuesday starting February 7. On Feb. 7 and 21st Jake will help students file the online FAFSA application during the school day. Please sign-up in the counselor's office to make an appointment.

The following web site will take seniors and parents to the 2012 FAFSA on the Web Worksheet:

<http://www.fafsa.ed.gov>. The FAFSA worksheet can help speed up the process of completing the FAFSA online.. Students are encouraged to complete this worksheet prior to working with Mr. Watters.

To complete the FAFSA on-line the following is needed:

Student Information

Social security number
Tax return from 2010 or 2011, W2's
Marital status
Citizenship & state residency
Education history
Major course of study
Expected course workload
Interest in student loans & work study
Income taxes and deductions (including spouse's)
Spouse's income
Assets
Dependency status
Household
List of schools you are interested in attending

Parent Information

Social security number
Tax return from 2010 or 2011, W2's
Marital status
Income taxes & deductions
Household assets
Family members
State residency
Age
Tax return

FAFSA WORKSHOP DATES/LOCATIONS FOR SENIORS & THEIR PARENTS

The following is a list of locations where students & parents can receive help completing their FAFSA. Remember to take a copy of parent's and student's tax return, W-2 forms, and social security numbers plus the 2012 FAFSA on the Web Worksheet (if you have it available, but not required).

(Link for FAFSA worksheet <http://www.fafsa.ed.gov/fotw1112/pdf/fafsaws12c.pdf>)

Parents may go to the FAFSA application at www.fafsa.ed.gov and complete sections of the applications prior to the workshops listed below.

February 7th from 8:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. at MCHS

(call Mercer County High School at 582-2223 ext. 3 for an appointment)

February 26th: College Goal Sunday at Black Hawk College (1-3)

(Building 1 Lower Lobby, 6600 34th Avenue, Moline)

March 1st: College Goal Sunday at Black Hawk College (East Campus in Galva, Illinois)

(Building A-2nd Floor)

SCHOLARSHIPS

Scholarships may be downloaded and/or completed at: <http://www.mercerschools.org/hscounselor.php>.

Seniors have received a list of upcoming scholarship due dates. An up-dated list of scholarships is available each month in the counselor's office and on the school web site at www.mercerschools.org,

(click high school, counselor, and scholarships).

For additional scholarship information and searches, visit the following web sites:

2. College Zone www.collegezone.com

6. Sallie Mae – www.salliemae.com

3. Fastweb-financial aid- www.fastweb.com

7. Financial Aid - www.finaid.org

4. Scholarship Aide- www.scholaraid.com

5. Plato- www.fastweb.com (Private Scholarship Search site)

SCHOLARSHIP DUE DATES

Go to <http://www.mercerschools.org/hscounselor.php> to download scholarship applications. Click on the [blue link](#) to open the application.

The Scholarship page includes scholarships that have been updated for the 2011-2012 school year. The site will be updated periodically as scholarships and/or due dates become available. Check the scholarship closely for criteria, instructions, due date and procedures for submitting. If you have any questions please contact the counselor's office.

Scholarship	Special Instructions/Information	Click On the Link Below to Access Scholarship	Due Date
AXA Achievement Community Scholarship	Different than the AXA Achievement Scholarship	www.axa-achievement.com	Feb. 1, 2012
DAR Scholarships (2 scholarships available)	General Henry Dearborn American History Illinois Daughters of the American Revolution	General Dearborn American Hist. Scholarship Illinois DAR	Feb. 1, 2012
CBAI Foundation for Community Banking	Call 800-736-2224 or cbaicom@cbaicom.com for info.		Feb. 7, 2011 (TBA)
KFC Colonel's Scholars		www.kfcscholars.org	Feb. 8, 2012
World Class Mediacom		www.mediacomworldclass.com	Feb. 15, 2012
1 st Farm Credit Services	Entering Agriculture related field	http://www.1stfarmcredit.com/AboutUs/Pages/ScholarshipPrograms.aspx	Feb. 15, 2012
Cargill Community		www.ffa.org	Feb. 15, 2012
FFA Scholarships	There are numerous scholarships that can be applied for through the FFA Scholarship.	www.ffa.org Under Programs, click on Scholarships	Feb. 15, 2012
Best Buy Community Volunteer Service Awards		www.bestbuy-communityrelations.com	Feb. 15, 2012
Community Foundation of the Great River Bend	Includes the following scholarships for residents of Mercer or Rock Island County: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don. E. & Charlotte Williams • Edwin R. Adland & Ruth Adland • Louis F. Bulechek Memorial • Mike Condon Memorial • Great River Bend Cyclone Award Please check criteria for each scholarship	http://www.cfgrb.org/scholarship.html Go to www.cfgrb.org to complete the scholarship application on-line. Only on-line applications will be accepted starting this year. CFGRB scholarships require an essay and 2 letters of recommendation. Please allow plenty of time to gather this information prior to February 17th. After completing the on-line application, contact Mrs. Snyder in the main office to have your transcript sent.	Feb. 17, 2012
Illinois PTA Lillian E. Glover	Entering Education or Education related field	http://www.illinoispta.org/ (Under Programs, click on Scholarship)	Feb. 17, 2012
American Legion O'Fallersans Post # 121		American Legion Aledo (New application not yet arrived)	Feb. 25, 2011 (TBA)
Warren-Henderson Farm Bureau Foundation	Parents are members of the Warren-Henderson Farm Bureau. Agriculture or agri-business field	www.whfarmbureau.org	February 29, 2012
Frank E. Smith Family	Return to Main Office at MCHS	Frank E. Smith	Last attendance day in Feb.
Aledo Main Street	Application may be returned to Pam Myers at Aledo Main Street or the counselor's office	www.aledomainstreet.com	Mar. 1, 2012
Illinois AMVETS	Various Scholarships	http://www.ilamvets.org/prog_scholarships.cfm	Mar. 1, 2012
Il Odd Fellows and Rebekahs		www.ioof-il.org	Mar. 1, 2012
Township Officials of Illinois		Township Officials of Illinois	Mar. 1, 2012
Marine Corps Schol.		http://www.mcsf.org/	Mar. 1 year ap.
National Defense Trans.		http://www.ndtascottstlouis.org/	Mar. 1, 2012
Simon Youth Foundation		http://sms.scholarshipamerica.org/simonyouth/	Mar. 1 2012
SAMMY (got milk?)		www.bodybymilk.com	Mar. 2012
Exchange Club of Aledo Youth of the Year	Application must be turned in to the counselor's office by Mar. 7	Exchange Club of Aledo Youth of the Year (New application not yet arrived)	Mar. 7, 2011 (TBA)
Illinois Retired Teacher Association Foundation, Inc.	Application must be submitted prior to student's junior or senior year of college. Student must be accepted into a Teacher Cert. Program	http://www.irtaonline.org/foundation/programs/scholarship.cfm	Mar. 7, 2012
Illinois Sheriff's Association		www.ilsheriff.org	Mar. 12, 2012
Brand Boeshaar Scholarship		http://figgeart.org/Education/Youth-Teen-Programs.aspx	Mar. 9, 2012
Walmart Dependent Scholarship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Walmart Dependent Applicants Sam Walton Community (<i>discontinued</i>) 	https://www.act.org/walmart/depend/	March 15, 2012
Aledo Police Benevolent Association Unit #200		Aledo Police Benevolent Association (New application not yet arrived)	Mar. 15, 2011 (TBA)
Ill. Div. of Sons of Confederate Veterans	Must be a descendant of male who served in the Confederate Branch of America	Il. Div. of Sons of Confederate Veterans	Mar. 15, 2012
Zonta Club of the Quad Cities Young Women in Public Affairs	Application must be typed or printed on a computer. Application must be received by Mar. 18, 2011.	Zonta Young Women in Public Affairs or http://www.zontaquadcities.org/ or http://www.zonta.org/	Mar. 18, 2011 (TBA)
Society of American Military Engineers Rock Island Post	Pursuing a career in engineering or physical sciences	http://posts.same.org/rockisland/scholarships.htm	Mar. 25, 2011 (TBA)
Evelyn K. Titus Memorial	Resident of Warren County majoring in Agriculture or Family & Consumer Sciences or a related field	www.whfarmbureau.org	Mar. 30, 2012

Mercer County Farm Bureau	Applicants must be a member or dependent of a member of the MC Farm Bureau	Mercer County Farm Bureau (New application not yet arrived)	Mar. 31, 2011
Mercer County Women for Women		Mercer County Women for Women (New application not yet arrived)	Mar. 31, 2011 (TBA)
Patti Jeanne Higgins 4-H Scholarship	Resident of Mercer or Warren County, actively involved in 4-H for a min. of 3 years	http://web.extension.illinois.edu/hmw/	Mar. 31, 2011 (TBA)
PEO Chapter AG Keithsburg	MCHS female seniors	PEO Chapter AG (New application not yet arrived)	Mar. 31, 2011 (TBA)
Blaser / Stone Memorial	Applicant must have a financial need	Blaser/Stone Memorial (New application not yet arrived)	1 st . Mon. in Apr.
Connie Sue Smith Memorial	Must show financial need Return to counselor's office	Connie Sue Smith	1 st . Mon. in Apr.
Aledo Chapter #126 Order of the Eastern Star	Pursuing a course of study in a helping field (such as but not limited to: teaching, nursing, social work, related medical field).	Aledo Chap. #126 Order of the Eastern Star (New application not yet arrived)	Apr. 1, 2011 (TBA)
Brad's Collision Service Industrial Arts Scholarship	Pursuing a career in an industrial arts field	Brad's Collision Service Industrial Arts	Apr. 1
Donald Kiser Memorial	Pursuing studies in chemistry, biochemistry or chemical engineering	Donald Kiser Memorial II-Ia Sec. American Chem. Society	Apr. 1, 2012
Eastern Iowa Comm. College Foundation	This includes Clinton, Muscatine, and Scott Community College	http://www.eicc.edu/adultlearning/costs/financialaid/scholarship/application.html	Apr. 1 year applying
Mercer County Retired Teachers Association	Entering Education Field	Mercer County Retired Teachers	Apr. 1, 2012
Southeastern Community College Foundation		http://www.sciowa.edu/scripts/admissions/financialaid/scholapp.asp	Apr. 1, 2012
Kiwanis	Mail to: Kiwanis Scholarship PO Box 92, Aledo, IL 61231	Kiwanis	2 nd Tues. of April
Aledo Lodge No. 252	Submit application to Aledo Lodge No. 252 101 S.W. 3 rd St. Aledo, IL 61231	Aledo Lodge No. 252	2 nd Fri. of April
Mercer County Education Association	Intend to work toward teacher certification Return to counselor's office	Mercer County Education Association (New application not yet arrived)	2 nd Fri. of April
Chapter H PEO	Female, GPA of 2.5 or higher Click on scholarship for details	Chapter H PEO (word) Chapter H PEO (PDF)	Apr. 10 of year applying
Mercer County D.A.R.E.		Mercer County D.A.R.E. (New application not yet arrived)	Apr. 15, 2011 (TBA)
Westmer Larger Parish	You do not have to be affiliated with any of the churches of the Westmer Larger Parrish to apply.	Westmer Larger Parish (New application not yet arrived)	Apr. 15, 2011 (TBA)
ASHRAE	Heating, Refrigerating & Air Conditioning Engineers	http://www.mississippivalleyashrae.org/student/student.htm	Apr. 27, 2012
France J. Anderson Nursing Scholarship	2.75 GPA or higher, accepted in an accredited college pursuing nursing	France J. Anderson Nursing Scholarship (New application not yet arrived)	Apr. 25, 2011 (TBA)
Mercer County Golden Eagle Athletic Booster Club		MCGE Athletic Booster Club Scholarship (New application not yet arrived)	Apr. 19, 2011 (TBA)
Aledo Jaycees Scholarship	Application must be mailed or returned to the counselor's office by April 30, 2011	Aledo Jaycees Scholarship (New application not yet arrived)	Apr. 30, 2011 (TBA)
David Wayne Miller Award for Outstanding Artistic Achievement	Exhibited a love of artistic expression with plans for further education	David Wayne Miller Award (New application not yet arrived)	Apr. 30, 2011 (TBA)
Mercer Credit Union	Must be a member in good standing of the Mercer Credit Union.	http://www.mercercu.com/	Apr. 30 of year applying
Cheryl Long Helping Hand	Open to all students with priority give to students entering a Medical Field	Cheryl Long Helping Hand	May 1 of year applying
Chris Long Memorial	Open to all students with priority give to students entering a Medical Field	Chris Long Memorial Scholarship	May 1 of year applying
Mellinger Education Foundation	Application and transcript must be received by May 1 Mellinger Foundation, 1025 East Broadway, Monmouth, IL 61462	http://mellinger.org/ Application available starting Feb. 1	May 1 of year applying
Rock Island Optometric Center	Submit Essay to the counselor's office by May 1 or year applying	Rock Island Optometric Center	May 1 of year applying
Black Hawk College Foundation Scholarship Program	Complete application must be returned to BHC	http://foundation.bhc.edu/scholarships/	May 2011 (TBA)

Seniors are reminded to complete the FAFSA at www.fafsa.ed.gov by February 10, 2012.

Federal/state moneys are distributed on a first come/first serve basis. Student's are encourage to file early using last year's taxes, then make corrections after your taxes are filed for this year. If you need assistance completing the application please contact the counselor's office.